

## Operating Public Swimming Pools

Preventing Recreational Water Illnesses (RWIs) is a multifaceted issue that requires participation from pool staff, swimmers and health departments. Poor maintenance can result in low disinfectant levels that can allow the spread of a variety of germs that cause diarrhea as well as skin and respiratory RWIs. Although pool staff alone cannot completely stop these complex problems, they play a key role in assuring the health of pool visitors. By following a few simple steps, aquatic managers and staff can lead the way.



- Obtain state or local authority-recommended operator training. Suggested national training courses are listed at <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyswimming/courses.htm>.
- Ensure availability of trained operation staff during the weekends when pools are most heavily used.
- Maintain free chlorine levels continuously between 1-3 parts per million.
- Maintain the pH level of the water at 7.2-7.8.
- Test pH and disinfectant levels at least twice per day (hourly when in heavy use).
- Maintain accurate daily records of disinfectant and pH measurements.
- Maintain filtration and recirculation systems according to manufacturer recommendations.
- Scrub pool surfaces, particularly tile, to remove any slime layer.
- Provide disinfection guidelines for fecal accidents and body fluid spills.
- Ensure adequate numbers of easily found, clean, close, and safe restrooms and diaper changing areas.
- Implement large group orientations, particularly for young children, and bathroom break policies to promote healthy swimming.
- Educate pool users and parents about RWIs and appropriate pool use (i.e., no swimming when ill with diarrhea).

For more details on preventing RWIs at your aquatics facility, see  
<http://www.cdc.gov/healthyswimming/twelvesteps.htm>